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LAND FOR LANDLESS.

Nearly 40,000 names were registered for lands in the Uintah reservation when the time for registrations came to an end on Saturday. Not more than half that number, and it is possible that the proportion is even smaller, have any idea of becoming land owners. Thousands of people registered with the hope of winning a choice selection and disposing of it later, after going through the formalities required by the government.

If half the reports regarding the character of the land to which the registrants will have access are true, there is very little good ground on the reservation. Naturally there will be many disappointments. Many of those who want to build homes will be denied the privilege, many who draw lands will find that it is not worth having. But the opening cannot fail to be of benefit to the state, because it will bring to it some citizens who will add materially to the taxable wealth of the state.

And speaking of public lands, they are to have a great land sale in Texas soon. The state has 6,000,000 acres of what is said to be very fine soil that it is going to place on the market September 1. No purchaser will be allotted more than 160 acres, so that large purchases will be impossible, and the land must be occupied within ninety days of the date of the sale. The terms of sale are of the easiest character.

It is provided that one-fortieth of the price must be paid at once. Then the buyer has forty years in which to pay the balance, with interest at five per cent. Some of the land will be sold as cheaply as a dollar an acre and none of it is very expensive. The land is not confined to any section of the state. It is to be found in practically every county, though the greater part is up towards the northwestern boundary.

While the soil is not productive now it is said that with irrigation abundant crops can be raised and plenty of water is easily accessible. The money derived from the sale will go into the school fund, part of which is to be used in the construction and maintenance of a great university.

VALUE OF RAILROADS.

The results of an investigation into the actual, commercial value of the railroad property of the country have just been given to the public in the form of a census bulletin. The purpose of the investigation was to find out how much money is invested in the railroads and how much the property is worth. It was found, for one thing, that the roads are not worth as much by more than a billion dollars as the amount of their capitalization and debts, the figures being $11,244,852,000 for the value and $12,599,990,258 for stock and indebtedness.

The difference is accounted for by the fact that many of the railroads are over-capitalized. A great deal of water has been poured into their preferred and common stock. Pennsylvania stands at the head of the list of states in railroad values. The railroads of the state are commercially worth $1,420,608,000. No other state shows a valuation as high as a billion. Delaware stands lowest with only $17,235,000.

The valuations given are of railroad property purely. They do not include private cars and car lines, such as the Pullmans and the refrigerator and fast freight cars. The Pullmans alone are worth $51,000,000 and the private cars show an aggregate value of $72,000,000. If they were added to the other list, and they might properly be, the grand total would be considerably in excess of eleven and one-half billions of dollars.

A comment on the bulletin says:

"In all the states and territories except Connecticut the assessed valuations of the railroads are less than their estimated commercial values. In that state the total assessed valuation is 114.4 per cent of the commercial valuation. In Arizona, on the other hand, the assessed valuation is but 9.7 per cent of the commercial value, in Oklahoma but 15.2 per cent, in Iowa but 16.7, in Kansas but 16.9. The percentages vary from this up to 70 per cent in Michigan and 63.8 in Illinois.

"Apparently in all the states, except, perhaps, Connecticut and one or two others, the railroads are treated with great fairness and are not required to contribute in any larger proportion than other persons and corporations doing business in the community to defraying the expenses of government. In some states they contribute too little."

A HARD LOSER.

Those Rockefellers seem to be hard losers. Here is Frank Rockefeller of Cleveland suing a St. Louis man for $265,000 just because the St. Louis man sold him a mine for that sum and the mine turned out badly. In the complaint Mr. Rockefeller alleges that the defendant assured him the mine was worth more than $2,000,000. Just to be a good fellow, though, he was willing to let Rockefeller have it for $200,000, or one-tenth of its real value. So Rockefeller bought the property and, after he had spent $65,000 in development work, he found that the mine was valueless.

There is a saying to the effect that the Lord loveth a cheerful loser, or is it giver? In any event Mr. Rockefeller, in suing to recover his money, is violating all the known rules of the game. It was most unreasonable of him to expect to get a $2,000,000 mine for $200,000. The members of the Rockefeller family are not ordinarily regarded as worthy objects of philanthropy. A man with $200,000 in his pocket and more somewhere else should not expect the rest of the good things of earth to be handed to him on a silver platter. People are not sitting up at night devising ways of making rich men richer.

On the contrary, some people lose sleep figuring out plans for making rich people poorer. Mr. Rockefeller apparently encountered that sort of a man. He thought he was buying an article twenty-four carats fine, but his assay shows startlingly different results. Yet he wants his money back. Now isn't that discouraging to the honest promoter? Things are coming to a pretty pass when men who try to get ten times the value of their money and fail are given standing in a court of law. Mr. Rockefeller should charge that $265,000 into his experience account and try to look pleasant.

That's what most of us out here in the mining country do. There is hardly one of us that hasn't been tempted, hardly one that hasn't purchased a brick or two in our time. We have seen many a beautiful certificate, all gilded and sealed and signed and delivered, not turn to ashes in the mouth, but turn to wall paper in the safe. And we have determined that never, never, never, will we buy any more wall paper under the impression that it is mining stock of the most valuable character. But time flies and we forget. First thing we know we have accumulated some more of that expensive wall paper, and so the experience account grows and grows.

Mr. Rockefeller should take a leaf out of the western book.

SHATTERING OUR IDOLS.

The Toronto Star offers vigorous objection to the statement by an American historian that the American revolution was justified because it was led by a man of Washington's high character. The Star does not believe it necessarily follows that because the leader of a cause is a man of splendid character the cause he leads is righteous. Then comes this fling at some of our idols:

"For that one man of character, there were a dozen men of no character at all. Patrick Henry was a seedy, disreputable demagogue; Sam Adams was a shabby defaulter and mendicant; Ben Franklin was an immoral old reprobate. The character of Washington was imperfect morally, like that of most Virginians of his time. Certainly his virtues do not loom large enough to justify revolution. Generals Stonewall Jackson and Robert E. Lee were men of far higher and more austere virtues. Did these virtues make the Civil war a righteous cause?"

Well, well, well. Who'd a thunk it? Patrick Henry a "seedy, disreputable demagogue," Samuel Adams a "shabby defaulter and mendicant," Benjamin Franklin "an immoral old reprobate." It is quite apparent that we will have to revise some of our histories. But perhaps the Star is just a wee bit harsh. Patrick Henry and Adams and Franklin were only men. They had their faults, just as other men have faults, but we shall refuse to dislodge them from their pedestals even at the suggestion of the Toronto Star.

Why, there have been worse men in prominent public life in England than any of the patriots the Star mentions. We can't expect the Star to concede this point, but it is true, nevertheless.

Secretary Taft told the Filipinos that if they were good they would be given a popular assembly in 1907. If they are horrid they will get nothing of the kind. As nobody really wants the Philippines except the Filipinos, why not give them the islands now?

Carl Carlson, burglar, who was held at the point of a revolver with a woman at the other end of it, is evidently not a believer in the tales the funny men tell about how women marksmen always hit everything except the thing they aim at.

It wasn't hot enough in Sulphur Springs, Texas, Friday, so the people burned a negro at the stake. Now if the proper officials do their duty they will keep things hot around Sulphur Springs for some time to come.

WITH THE PARAGRAPHERS.

He Should Resurrect Joe Miller.

(Omaha World-Herald.)

Senator Depew talks more freely about the Equitable now that he is on the other side of the Atlantic, and it would not be surprising if it should once more "remind him of a story."

That Boat Can Stand Anything.

(Kansas City Times.)

The good ship Manchuria is manifestly a sturdy craft. A Honolulu dispatch says several dances were given on board during the voyage, "in which Secretary Taft participated."

Too Humid For Hot Stuff.

(Atlanta Constitution.)

President Roosevelt will send a special commissioner to Venezuela. Oh, don't stir it any more now; wait till the weather gets cooled and the prevailing wind is not from the south!

Just Look What We Missed!

(Philadelphia Ledger.)

And to think that the summer capital of the nation might have been at Esopus, N. Y., with daily bulletins of the president's Hudson river morning baths.

That Is the Easiest Way.

(Pittsburg Chronicle.)

Instead of having Virgil P. Kline and others write pieces in answer to Miss Tarbell, why don't Mr. Rockefeller have the whole matter taken to The Hague?

It Doesn't Take Long Up There.

(Philadelphia Telegraph.)

Peary is off on another hunt for the elusive North pole, and it is a question how long he will have to hang around the Arctic regions to get cold feet.

That Is the Big Problem.

(St. Louis Republic.)

Lawson of Boston inquires how to give away money. An answer will be tendered if he will agree to explain how to get it.

Isn't That Just Awful!

(Atlanta Journal.)

Alexander Dowie says that he yearns to save Paris, but naughty Paris says that it will be damned before it will be Dowied.

How Dan Kent Missed His Thanksgiving Banquet

(John H. Raftery, in Chicago Tribune.)

The Kents—father and son—came to Chicago when Dan was a small boy, so that the latter soon forgot about all he knew of Oldsburg and its people. If he had been older he might have been gladder to forget it, for there misfortune had overtaken his family, his mother had died, and his vague recollection of the place pictured the one long, dismal street down which he rode in a carriage to the cemetery, where the autumn leaves reeked in a cold rain and the clay falling into a grave sounded like the thump of his old toy drum.

Dan Kent, having a merry heart, didn't want to cherish any such dreary memories. So he had grown to manhood without revisiting the home of his infancy. Not so his father. The old man managed to stay away from the scene of his disaster till Joshua Colvin died. Then he went to the funeral of his old friend and partner, and ever after, up to the time of his death, maintained a habit of periodical visits to the old home town. Dan thought this odd at first; then he began to suspect that there was some old, long buried romance between his father and the Widow Colvin.

"You're right, Dan," said the old man, when his son twitted him about the Oldsburg visits. "I'd marry her now if I wasn't so old and poor, and if you take my advice you'll go after her daughter, Kate."

They were like brothers in their frank and loving relationship in those days, and Dan, who liked to banter his father, was almost glad to "have something" on the old man. But when the elder Kent grew feeble he talked always more and more of the Colvins. If they were a joke with Dan, they were not so with his father.

"I wish you'd go up and see them," he would say. "I can't any more, and—Dan—I wish you'd see Kate—young Kate. Bet you'd fall in love with her in spite of yourself. I wish you would, and marry her."

And a few days before he died:

"Dan, if anything happens to Kate or her mother, will you do what you can for them? Promise, Dan. You'll write to them, anyhow."

When his father died, Dan grieved like a man, and regained his spirits like the wholesome, clean-hearted youth he was; but he forgot about the Colvins after he had answered the widow's letter of condolence. He remembered them again when he saw in the Oldsburg Banner the obituary of Mrs. Kate Niebling Colvin. He ought to have gone to Oldsburg to comfort the orphan girl, but he disliked funerals and he couldn't get over his gloomy impression of the old town. So he wrote a letter to Kate, as he had promised his father, sending such words of comfort as a stranger must, but offering to be of any assistance in his power. He scarcely expected a reply, but he got one within a week.

It was a stilted, studied letter. She was grateful for kind words from the son of her mother's kind friend. She would do quite well, she thought, when she got back to her work as a school teacher. Her work might help her to forget. It was a dismal letter—just like Oldsburg, he thought—and he did not answer it. A month later he got another from her. Would he kindly buy for her Kinyon's pedagogical chart? It would cost about $1, which she inclosed. "I will be ever so much obliged," she concluded. He found the chart, which cost $3, and sent her a note in which he said he was glad to be of service. He didn't mention that he was loser by $2 in the transaction.

Within a fortnight another letter came to him from Kate Colvin, in which she said that she had just learned the chart had cost $3, perhaps more, and that she "would return the balance the moment her salary was paid. They are in arrears with me for the last two months," the letter said, "but I am sure they will pay us before Christmas."

To Dan Kent there was something poignantly sad in the plain, simple, but uncomplaining statement of the country school teacher's poverty. Two dollars! He was making money and spending it as lavishly as a self respecting young man could. Evidently poor Kate Colvin could not spare $2 from a scanty hoard that might not be replenished at once. He was a generous, tender fellow, and, somehow, that bald, almost childlike confession of a girl's lonely struggle for the benefits which he won so easily and regarded so lightly, gave a sharp sting to his gentle spirit and clouded his radiant face.

Then he made a natural but a most egregious mistake. He wanted to write a kind, sympathetic and helpful letter, but he let a lot of sentiment into it. Sentimental passages never look right to a sensible girl who reads them in a letter from a man she has never seen. Besides, Dan wasn't exactly a master of rhetoric at that time, and what he wrote could have been couched in terms of infinitely greater tact and delicacy by any second rate romance writer. His first faux pas, however, was in enclosing a postoffice money order for $50, "a loan, of course," he wrote, "which I trust you will accept until such time," etc.

It was awful, of course, but Dan was young and he meant to do a kind office to the orphan girl in Oldsburg. When he mailed the letter it dawned upon him that he had made an ass of himself. The more he conned over the sentences which he had meant to be the finest, the surer he was that they were coarse, impertinent, idiotic. She would be offended at his tone, insulted at his offer to loan her money. "I feel that there is a bond of sympathy between us," etc., had been the best he could think of as "an approach" to the mention of a loan, but now it sounded inexpressibly silly. He got her answer by return mail, and when he tore open the envelope the $50 fell on the floor. "Serves me right," he gasped, but his eyes began to bulge when he saw the first line of the letter itself:

"Dear, dear friend," it began. 'Sad, sad, indeed must that heart be which cannot be cheered by the sweet delicacy and soulful sympathy of a friend like you. O, how my lonesome heart goes out responsively, and yet——"

"Rats!"

That's what Dan said. He could hardly force himself to read it. If his letter had been badly framed, hers was the dregs of gush. A wild hope that Kate Colvin hadn't written it seized him, but the narrowest comparison showed it to be her handwriting. There was nothing absolutely immodest in her hysterical epistle, but it fairly oozed sentimentality, which Dan was sure he would always despise in a woman.

"Glad to get back my fifty, anyhow," he sneered, pocketing the order and tearing the letter with one angry jerk. Then he paused, put the torn edge of her communication together, and reread it. "Oh, how my lonely heart goes out responsively." That line started him, and he laughed till the bookkeeper stared and the stenographer joined in the merriment.

"I'll get back at her," thought Dan Kent, as he opened his desk. And he spent two hours that evening trying to outdo the florid periods of his Oldsburg protege. But he didn't send back the fifty. On Saturday he got an answer that fairly scintillated with flashes of Cupid's arrows. He had supposed that his letter rose to every flight of sentimental hyperbole, but it seeemed commonplace and tawdry beside the glittering fabric of her latest epistolary composition.

He had to get "The Children of the Abbey" from the public library before he could answer that letter, and, in order to stimulate her to a still more generous effusion, he wound up his ecstatic billet with a superbly servile petition for her picture. He said "counterfeit presentment" first, but, for fear she'd regard that as a mercenary allusion, he scratched the words away and substituted "fair image." The photograph that arrived in the next letter was worthy of the foolish girl's correspondence. A simpering, weak smile, evidently calculated to display two pretty dimples and a row of the white teeth; a mass of fluffy blonde hair, falling almost to the eyebrows; a white lawn dress of a style that had been considered "smart" a few years ago; bangle rings on the dainty fingers!

"She looks the part," laughed Dan, "and if I don't send her my picture now this sport will come to a sudden end."

The letter suggested an exchange, and Dan, in the exuberance of what seemed such a capital joke, determined to send her the picture of his barber, a dashing young gallant, with melancholy black eyes and a tightly waxed Wilhelm mustache.

It was Kent's irrepressible love of fun that led him into this thoughtless and, for him, unkind correspondence. But the letters had passed so rapidly and with such increasing and almost outlandish expressions of romantic emotion that he had not taken time to look at any but the funny side of the affair. He had shown the letters to nobody, destroying them as soon as they were read. When he had mailed the barber's photograph to Kate with his autograph on its back he resolved to make an end of an escapade which was just beginning to cloy.

As he grew serious, he reflected upon the folly—"folly? Perhaps it was mean of me," he thought; and this last idea held him so that he went home and wrote an honest, manly letter to the girl, in which he strove to exonerate himself. He knew she would forgive him for returning her photograph, he said, and for asking her to forget the whole episode, which, he hoped, had given her as much harmless merriment as it had given him. The tone of this letter was so modest, so sensible, so self-deprecating, and so completely disillusioning that Dan thought as he dropped it in the mail box:

"Dad would have liked that letter. I would never have written the others if he had been with me."

That was Monday. Thursday was Thanksgiving day, and as Dan Kent was to be the guest at a banquet that evening, he resolved to get a substantial meal in his favorite cafe. The place was crowded with diners, and he looked in vain for a familiar face. The head waiter found a place for him at a table at which sat a woman alone. She was modestly, but quite fashionably, attired, young—perhaps twenty—at ease, with an odd mixture of confidence and shyness. Her black eyes shone with the light of a brave and quick intelligence. Her swart hair drooped about her small ears in smooth glistening tresses. Her red mouth—

Dan had got thus far in his subconscious cataloguing of the beautiful woman opposite him when she darted one angry glance at him in which there was an unanswerable reproof for his fascinated stare. It vanished as quickly as it came. She drew from her reticule a parcel of papers, read a clipping, and then unfolded his letter to Kate Colvin with the same photograph of the Oldsburg school teacher that he had mailed on Mondoy! He started, looked again, stood up, and betrayed his curiosity by leaning forward.

She glared at him, looked frightened for an instant, and then flushed with anger.

"How dare you!" was all she said, but the emphasis of her low voice helped him.

"I beg your pardon, madam," he answered, sitting down. "I wrote that letter myself to the girl whose picture you have there, and it startled me to see it in your hand. I am the 'Dan' of that letter, Daniel Kent—."

He stopped short. Her faces wa wreathed in smiles.

"Why, Dan," she commenced, in that same sweetly stinging voice. "No! Are you Daniel Kent? The picture? Anyhow, if you're Daniel Kent, or just a friend of his who helped him try to make a fool of a country girl, you're both mistaken. I'm Kate Colvin."

She began the sentence with a coo and ended it with a rasp.

Dan was dumfounded, but he got out his card and gave it to her.

"Well, you might have known I wasn't the kind to borrow money from a man I had never seen," she said, smiling, and her brune cheeks red. "You might have known I wasn't fool enough to write drivel to an utter stranger. As for you, I thought you were a downright idiot until I got that last letter. That rang true. I came down to Chicago to pay you the $2 I owe you, and to —."

"But Kate," asked the delighted Daniel, "what prompted you to start the—foolishness?"

"Oh, I didn't like your sending that money, and—well, I didn't want to be pitied, either. I imagined you were one of those Chicago smarties, and—well, it was dull in Odsburg; it's always dull there."

"And now we've met and found each other out, Kate?"

They laughed like children, looking frankly into one another's happy faces.

"It's Thanksgiving, Dan," she said.

"I'll give thanks that this (holding out the picture of the pudgy blond) isn't you," he laughed.

"And I" give thanks that you couldn't look like this!" And she held out the picture of the dashing barber.

And they dined so merrily together that Dan forgot everything but Kate, and Kate nearly forgot to pay back the $2.